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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 02 PORT AU PRINCE 002824

SIPDIS

SOUTHCOM ALSO FOR POLAD
WHA ALSO FOR USOAS
S/CRS FOR MICHELLE SCHIMP
TREASURY FOR MAUREEN WAFER
STATE FOR WHA/CAR
STATE PASS AID FOR LAC/CAR
INR/IAA (BEN-YEHUDA)

E.O. 12958: DECL: 10/13/2010

TAGS: [PGOV](#) [PREL](#) [HA](#)

SUBJECT: HAITI ELECTIONS: PRESIDENTIAL LIST DONE, CALENDAR
PENDING

Classified By: Charge d'Affaires Douglas M. Griffiths for reasons 1.4(b).
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1. (C) Summary. The Provisional Electoral Council (CEP) on November 11 released the final list of 38 presidential candidates, excluding dual-nationals Dumarsais Simeus and Samir Mourra. With this step taken, CEP and MINUSTAH leadership and technical experts are finalizing logistical planning and aim to produce an electoral calendar by Tuesday, November 15. The CEP and MINUSTAH have made progress in many areas, but have uncovered problems in others. MINUSTAH staff have told Emboffs privately that they may formally conclude that a first-round of voting must be postponed until after the New Year. However, on November 14, Prime Minister Latortue told Charge Griffiths that the first round would be held in December. SRS Valdes repeated that pledge, telling the Charge that elections would be held December 22 or 27.

2. (C) After a period of intensive meetings between the IGOH and the CEP and consultations with core group members on November 10-11, CEP President Max Mathurin authorized the publication of the final list of presidential candidates on November 11. At the same time, the CEP transmitted letters to Simeus and Mourra reportedly stating that based on information provided to it by the State Commission on the Nationality of Candidates (CENC), the CEP determined that Simeus and Mourra are U.S. citizens and thus ineligible to run for the presidency. (Comment. The delay in publishing the presidential list ultimately stemmed from the CEP's search for a formula that would not allow Simeus or Mourra to legally challenge their ruling. In fact, the CENC did not provide any new information: the CEP knew of Simeus' and Mourra's U.S. citizenship at the time they published the provisional list that excluded Simeus but included Mourra. Nor has the CEP or CENC produced additional information regarding Simeus subsequent to the Supreme Court ruling on his behalf. Both Simeus and Mourra are aware of this and will factor it into their legal strategy. End Comment.)

3. (C) In addition to finalizing the presidential list, CEP and MINUSTAH officials and experts intensified their logistical planning efforts through the weekend ending November 13. As reported septel, the CEP on November 8 approved the establishment of 809 voting centers, a reduction from the 835 centers MINUSTAH had previously recommended. MINUSTAH officials subsequently report that some of those voting centers are not large enough to house the necessary number of voting stations (separate polling sites within the centers) and that some areas may have to be re-surveyed. Also as reported septel, OAS and CEP officials have concluded that they will not be able to distribute the estimated 3.4-3.45 million national identification cards until mid-December at the earliest. Devoting more personnel to that task to speed up the process would subsequently affect staffing for other electoral tasks. MINUSTAH officials also reported to Emboffs over that they would depend on the on-kind donation of 11 helicopters to transport voting results from the Departmental Offices to CEP headquarters in Port-au-Prince.

4. (C) MINUSTAH officials privately signaled to Emboffs over the weekend that they doubted the first round of elections could be held before the holiday season. SRS Valdes told Polcouns on Sunday, November 13 that while he continued to publicly push for December 18, his technicians had warned him that they could not guarantee legitimate elections by that date. Valdes suspected that once the CEP and MINUSTAH technical teams worked through a final workplan early the next week, they would formally recommend that the first round be delayed until January. Valdes said that with every last bit of time squeezed out of the preparations timeline between now and December 18, and with many logistical questions still to be finalized, prudence might dictate that the first round be postponed until January to protect the integrity of the electoral process. However, on November 14, Valdes told Charge that he thought elections could in fact be scheduled

on December 22 or 27.

15. (C) Comment. Election dates any time in December are predicated on an extremely tight calendar. Canadian Ambassador Claude Boucher told Charge on November 14 that their experts did not see a way to hold credible elections before January 3.
GRIFFITHS